

Questions for the Record
U.S. House Ways and Means Committee, Subcommittee on Trade
Hearing on Trade and Labor: Creating and Enforcing Rules to Benefit American Workers
March 26, 2019

From Representative Gwen Moore to Holly Hart

1. Governments, businesses, trade unions, civil society, and international organizations all have important roles in promoting and enabling good governance. What are meaningful actions the United Steelworkers union can undertake or have undertaken to fill the gaps in trade agreements and/or domestic policy that directly undermine the level playing field for businesses/labor and undermine the benefits that globalization is supposed to bring?

The United Steelworkers (USW) have been an active participant in over 90 anti-dumping and countervailing duty (AD/CVD) trade enforcement cases in recent years. The union has also successfully petitioned for Section 421 tariff enforcement on passenger and light truck tires (PVLТ) against China, and have supported the 232 tariff actions on steel and aluminum (while encouraging an exclusion for Canada and action on global overcapacity). The union must engage in this aggressive enforcement as we have seen import penetration fostered by unfair trade practices and non-market economy actions undermine our country's workers, their communities and the privately-owned companies for which they work. On the whole, federal policy-makers have not responded to globalization in a manner that allows workers to truly benefit, leaving the union to come to workers' defense with the tools we have in existing trade law.

The union has also engaged with our global union partners to address global inequality issues. For example, this includes working with Liberian rubber workers to organize workers who at the time made \$3.38 if they tapped 750 trees and collected 150 pounds of latex using entire families for labor.¹

USW also actively engages in a number of international forums ranging from IndustriALL and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Active participation in these fora has also deepened our work with foreign unions who are all addressing globalization as well.

Unfortunately, with trade agreements, unions do not have the same rights as corporate entities. Flagrant labor law violations in countries with which the US has free trade agreements, continue to see significant attacks on workers labor rights.² Nineteen Colombian trade unionists were murdered in 2017 alone.³ The ability of workers to band together and make change at their workplace has to be protected in trade

¹ https://www.huffpost.com/entry/usw-helps-empower-workers_b_125171

² <https://www.seattletimes.com/business/thugs-break-up-mexico-union-vote-despite-new-trade-pact/https://www.seattletimes.com/business/thugs-break-up-mexico-union-vote-despite-new-trade-pact/>

³ <https://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/ituc-global-rights-index-2018-en-final-2.pdf>

agreements and American workers need a remedy to penalize foreign governments or corporations for failing to protect the rights of their workers.

2. Please explain how your union has evaluated the impact on the surrounding communities of collective bargaining on lowering unemployment rates and increasing wage productivity.

The USW sees the impact on surrounding communities in the services and jobs that those good paying union jobs create through local spending and support for the tax base. The recently restarted blast furnace in Granite City Illinois not only supports over 800 direct union jobs but the facility provides over \$67 million in local property taxes into the region (using 2015 numbers). In 2015, the Granite City School District received just under \$3 million dollars in local school district taxes from U.S. Steel alone. This does not include the local families who live in the area and own property. Through our union's advocacy and tireless effort to highlight global overcapacity in steelmaking and its impact on our nation's national security we aided not just this one community but also countless others through our work on trade and collective bargaining.